*177 439 Throughout the time period under consideration, commercial trade goods have been incorporated, mostly by way of substitution for their [412] local equivalent. Axeheads, cutlasses, knives, iron griddle pans, [415] cotton cloth, and shotguns reached the population in varying degrees [175] at the time of Gillin's study (1934:332). These trade goods did not lose their popularity. They have been added to by other external resources and their quantity and availability have been increased. [163] Eventually, a flow of external goods and services into the Upper [161] Barama River area has resulted in an increased birth rate and an [511] increasing population size, an improved standard of living, and [621] changes in the social organization of the population.

*177 175 443 [484] However, markets have been introduced and controlled by external agents. As has already been explained, the Upper Barama River Caribs do not have easy access to regional markets. They do not travel to transact regional exchanges. Rather, they have depended on the opportunities provided by non-Carib middlemen who reside in the Upper Barama River area and who have good access to the limited transportation and communication facilities. As characteristic of the conveyance of regional exchanges into remote areas, market opportunities have been highly personalized. This was characteristic of the early period of porknocking activities and the existence of the gold [659] companies. Personalized market networks continue to be associated with government programs and services at Baramita Air Strip.

*177 195 • 437 439 Market Opportunities Provided by the Early Gold Seekers

The earliest regional exchanges reported for these Caribs involved

food. Such exchanges were realized with the early prospectors. Provisions, especially cassava and meat, would be traded for salt, tools, tobacco, glass beads, and also money. Occasionally, parrots, monkeys, waracabras, and other pets were traded to these porknockers. Exchanges would occur more or less by chance. A porknocker might wander into a settlement and wait until the bashful residents had recovered themselves sufficiently to come out of hiding and deal with him. There was little bargaining. Rather, each party approached the exchange as a nonrecurring opportunity. When prospecting became more familiar among the Caribs, private ownership was recognized in gold creeks (Gillin 1934:335). The individual who discovered a specific creek was considered to be the owner. He could sell it, usually to a porknocker who came.

Eventually, Carib men exchanged short term periods of labor for trade goods. Often this work was done for a specific object. Guns which could be purchased over the counter in Georgetown were especially desired. An Amerindian would often be asked to cut down a large field and build a house for such a payment. However, as Gillin reports (1936:131), Caribs were not always so easily induced to work. The men of Savari refused employment by a prospector as they felt his trade goods were too meager. The Carib men had to desire the goods to be traded and also be assured of actually being paid and not expoited. It was some time before individual proknockers with their recurrent trips to the Upper Barama River area were able to count on help from specific Caribs. Even longer periods of trust were necessary before these Caribs agreed to work in return for specific trade goods

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

the porknocker would bring on his next trip from Georgetown. However, relations with porknockers remained as transient as the porknocking operations themselves.

In short, these early opportunities were of a windfall nature. Neither porknocker nor Carib was economically bound to the other. Thus, these were associational relationships. With the establishment of trust, both the porknocker and Carib cooperated for mutual benefit. If a porknocker abused an Amerindian, he and often others would no longer work for this person. The reputations of Amerindians were also important. These early, individualized exchanges served to bring in trade goods which were incorporated into the existing subsistence pattern of the population. However, it was not until the presence of the mining companies that market opportunities were localized and of a sufficiently permanent nature to affect the local Carib subsistence routine.

Markets Introduced by the Gold Companies

Population data suggest that there are significant changes in the nature of reproduction among the Carib population in the time periods before and after 1940, when mining companies were first established in the Upper Barama River area. A more precise investigation of the relationship of the local population to new market opportunities introduced by the gold mining companies is in order. It is not assumed that there is a definable equation between the quantity of trade goods reaching this population and an increased rate of birth. The process of adaptation to these new markets does not appear to be

*177 175 438 443 The trade store was the main vehicle for the involvement of the remainder of the population in regional exchange. With the establishment of Baird's enterprise, there was a constant call for local foods which the trade store stocked. Caribs not employed at the mine were then able to sell these foods on a more or less planned basis. The residents of Aranka, Baramita, and later the Air Strip, did this regularly. Caribs in the more remote settlements made more infrequent trips. However, the quantities required were limited. No special fields were cut nor special crops planted. Part of the regular subsistence production was used for these exchange purposes. Also, there operated informal consignment agreements. When a supply of meat, cassava, plantains, yams, or whatever ran low, individual men were invited to bring these to the store. Often no money changed [437] hands. Rather, small accounts were kept. In addition to exchanges centralized by the trade store, some exchanges occurred directly 175 between Caribs. The prices used were those at the trade store. Also, *177 for a short time, the missionaries contributed to the market oppor- 799 tunities in the area by occasionally hiring a few laborers, by buying 439 some local handicraft items, and by selling food and clothing.

*177 175 657 622 Before the mine closed in 1969, one other development occurred which further involved this population in regional exchange networks. A local administrative structure, devised and implemented by the Ministry of Local Government, has been imposed on Amerindian populations to promote national political integration.[3] Amerindian [666] offices were first introduced among the Upper Barama River Caribs with an election held at In Time in October 1967. From among four

*177 438 439 Since Gillin's time, miners, missionaries, and government projects have all combined to provide this population with market opportunities. Wages and external resources have come to be central in the problem of making a living in the bush. However, Caribs exercise little or no control of the market opportunities, nor do they have the means to travel to reach other markets. To this extent, the Upper Barama River Caribs have remained detached from managerial or entrepreneurial roles in their participation in regional exchanges. The conveyance of market opportunities into the Upper Barama River area has remained highly dependent on non-Carib middlemen. There are no intervening regional market networks with adjacent populations. Rather, exchange is directly with individuals who have come into the frontier from a center of commercial and governmental activity, Georgetown, and bring with them transportation and communication ties back to this center. With the considerable flux of individual middlemen and the market opportunities they have brought into the area, specific sources of regional trade have been marked by their impermanence. Thus, the Upper Barama River Caribs have increasingly become a population encapsulated within and dependent upon the national society.

*177 43 The relationships Caribs have had with middlemen reflect the highly fluid nature of regional exchanges. In the face of the obviously uncertain markets conveyed by the porknockers, Caribs remained uncommitted to these resource opportunities. In contrast, the men from the mining companies stood in a position of increased resource demand and control of the regional transportation and communication networks. [571] The more established nature of mining company enterprises promoted

*177 496 the dependent partners are identifiable. This contrasts to the associational nature of the previous pattern of cooperation among the Carib men.

*177 195 462 The increased isolation of the family group resident in a clearing has affected the assignment of tasks according to sex. Gillin reports a discrete separation of tasks (1936:3,46,51,71). Men would hunt and clear fields, construct houses, canoes and cassiri kanus, and do all basketry and plaiting. Women would harvest cultigens, gather edibles from the forest, prepare all food, sew, tend children, and exclusively assist in childbirth while the men were not allowed in the clearing. Men and women would cooperate to plant fields and poison streams for fish. During 1970-71, men were observed in their own households engaged in all of those tasks which previously were allocated to women. For the most part, women's tasks are those which must be done on a daily basis. Men assisted with the activity when the females in the household were otherwise indisposed and there was [844] no wider circle of females to call upon. Men now commonly deliver their wife's children. Women, on the other hand, were not observed taking part in any of the men's activities.

*177 437 [436] Exchanges between people from households in different clearings are now conveyed in terms of immediate exchange. Barter has been used, but increasingly the exchange of labor, food, or craft items *177 464 465 is conducted with money. Labor assistance, including help in clearing and planting fields, building houses and cassiri kanus, and processing cassiri, is paid for either in food or money. Manioc *177 43 tubers, the prepared cassava cakes, turtles and other bush meat are

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

000 been considered.

*177 476 • 439 To summarize, the extent of generalized reciprocity and, conversely, immediate exchange involving labor and material goods have been used to identify resource-sharing social units among the Upper

*177 621 Barama River Carib population. Over time, the resource-sharing boundaries have changed. In a position of relative isolation in the rain forest when Gillin studied them, the Upper Barama River Caribs evidence no pattern of material exchanges outside the settlement. This was a social unit fluctuating in location, size of population, as well as life span. Within settlements, further organization consisted of clearings and, within clearings, households. People resident in settlements tended to consist of a category of cooperating kinsmen. Among them, the exchange of labor and the sharing of tools and food was patterned on a generalized basis. Since the introduction of wage employment and other regional markets, the population has become centralized by participation in common regional networks of

*177 592 439 exchange. Settlements have tended to become more permanent and larger in population size. Households have tended to become separated from ties of generalized reciprocity with a wider kinship group. Exchanges directly between Carib households are now conducted with money or

*177 621 other immediate payments. However, there are no permanent stores of resources to support corporate organization or other institutional elaboration, and this population has been politically organized only to the extent that a local administrative structure has been imposed.

*177 602 Among the Upper Barama River Caribs, aspects of the regional networks of exchange have promoted certain kinship ties and dissolved others.